

# SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger

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SEE BIO OF USAF'S REIGNING ACE, LT. COL. JOHN C. MEYER



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July, August SEPTEMBER  
HISTORY OF THE

Director  
Research Studies Institute  
Army, USA Branch  
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P.R.C.



FOURTH FIGHTER GROUP

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4TH FIGHTER INTERCEPTOR GROUP

4TH FIGHTER INTERCEPTOR WING

P.R.C.

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24 OCT 1978

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## ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

On 5 August 1950 the 4th Fighter-Interceptor Group was informed of their coming move to the newly assigned bases. On the 13th day of that month the move began.

Upon arriving at New Castle County Airport the Group was welcomed by its new Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel John C. Meyer, relieving Colonel Albert L. Evans, Jr. The Group welcomes its new Commanding Officer and offers him their every aid.

Also new to the 335th Squadron is Lieutenant Colonel Donald W. Nance, relieving Lieutenant Colonel Harvey L. Case, Jr. as Commanding Officer. Lieutenant Colonel Nance transferred from Group Headquarters.

The move to the new bases has now placed the Squadrons of the 4th Fighter-Interceptor Group in strategic location for the protection of the East Coast. The importance of this assignment is being fully recognized and every effort is being made to carry it out to the fullest extent.



**PERSONNEL REPORT**  
(Period ending 30 September 1950)

<u>SSN</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASGN</u>	<u>OVER</u>	<u>SHORT</u>	<u>SSN</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASGN</u>	<u>OVER</u>	<u>SHORT</u>
014	10	7		5	646	1	1		
017	4	4			647	4	2		2
037	3	2		1	648	2	2		
050	2	2			657	5	3		2
055	10	8		2	667	2	2		
059	2	2			684C	14	15	1	
060	20	21	1		685	11	11		
062	23	22		1	686	4	2		2
070	1	1			687	2	1		1
073	2	2			747A	104	114	10	
097	1	1			747B	6	3		3
114	2	1		1	747C	12	6		6
120	1	1			750A	103	85		18
144	5	5			750B	4	2		2
164	2	1		1	750C	6	3		3
166	15	15			754	20	21	1	
188	2	2			766	5	3		2
194	1	1			791	10	9		1
212	2	2			805	3	3		
237	2	2			815	1	1		
239	1	1			821	11	11		
264	1	1			822	2	2		
274	3	2		1	824	3	3		
275	3	4	1		825	1	1		
279	3	2		1	826	16	15		3
319	2	2			835	31	21		10
345	30	30			861	3	3		
348	4	2		2	862	8	5		3
405	39	35		6	867	23	14		14
409	4	2		2	901	2	2		
485	2	1		1	903	2	1		1
486	2	1		1	911	42	33		9
502	13	12		1	925	6	4		2
505	3	2		1	931	4	2		2
523	7	5		2	932	14	13		1
534	1	1			941	7	7		
542	6	3		3	943	2	1		1
543	5	3		2	955A	11	6		5
550	2	1		1	957	2	1		1
555	18	13			958	2	1		1
566	1	1			965	10	6		4
573	3	3		2	673	3	2		1
581	2	2		1	677	23	23		
594	5	5			648	1	1		
620	4	3		1	856	1	1		
622	2	1		1	859	1	1		
631	5	4		1	969C	1	1		



<u>SSN</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASGN</u>	<u>OVER</u>	<u>SHORT</u>
9706	1	1		
0010	0	15	15	
1583	39	27		12
1824	2	2		
2747	5	3		
4409	1	1		

Total number of enlisted personnel authorized ..... 893  
 Total number of enlisted personnel assigned ..... 632

Officers

<u>SSN</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASGN</u>	<u>OVER</u>	<u>SHORT</u>	<u>SSN</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASGN</u>	<u>OVER</u>	<u>SHORT</u>
0200	4	4			4110	1	0		
0600	1	1			4593	3	3		
1059	75	69		6	4821	1	1		
2110	4	4			4823	7	8	1	
2120	3	2		1	4902	4	3		1
2161	7	7			5310	1	0		1
2200	3	1		2	5306	1	0		1
2210	0	1	1		6402	1	0		1
3100	2	0		2	7025	1	1		
3139	1	0		1	8101	1	1		
3150	1	0		1	9100	1	1		
3162	2	0		2	9301	2	1		1
3170	1	0		1	0001	2	4	2	
3449	3	0		3	0010	0	1	1	
4000	1	3	2		2700	0	11	11	
4010	1	1							

Total number of Officers authorized ..... 135  
 Total number of Officers assigned ..... 128



## SUPPLY AND MAINTENANCE

The main event of the month of July was the preparation for the movement of all squadrons from Langley Air Force Base, Virginia. Despite the move, inspections on all aircraft assigned the Group were completed during the month. Also left ailerons and trim actuators of the F-86A aircraft were sent to North American Aviation factory for modification.

The new B-8 Stick Grip installations began during the month of August and all F-86A aircraft will be equipped with the new grip within the near future. These aircraft are also being equipped with the new drop tanks and drop tank disconnect fittings as the material arrives.

One T-6 type aircraft was assigned the Group during this month and will be used for training purposes.

In September instructions were issued all squadrons within the Group to effect replacement of the "P" series Main Fuel Regulators with the "Q" series as soon as possible. This is being accomplished as fast as periodic inspections come due.

On 25 September 1950, a crew of fifteen personnel from the North American Aviation Modification Crew arrived to commence APX-6 modification on all F-86A type aircraft within the Group. It is estimated that this modification will be completed in approximately six weeks. At the end of the month eight installations had been completed.

Still another modification during September was one to accommodate the dingy.



## OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

Although there was a severe loss of personnel during the month of July, the Group was able to maintain a total of 833 hours flying time. The 334th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron was high Squadron in the Group with a total of 323:45 hours.

Training during that month consisted mainly of aerial gunnery, transition of new pilots, and scramble alerts. Despite preparations for the move the Group maintained its alert status and continued to fly intercept missions.

During the month of August, Operations was expected to fall below its normal status because of the loss of maintenance personnel and the move. After the move was completed an attempt was made to regain the lost flying time through night operations. At the ending of the month the Group had logged a total of 1,211 hours.

The 336th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, now located at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, began flying radar calibration missions with the assistance of the newly constructed radar calibration station known as "Mobile Nine".

September found the 335th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron stationed at its new base, Andrews Air Force Base, Washington 25, D.C. and faced with a fuel shortage and inclement weather. During this time ground school classes were conducted on such subjects as Emergency Procedures, High Altitude Navigation, Aircraft



Recognition, and Aviation Physiology.

A Squadron operation known as "Operation Metro" was conducted by the 335th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron during the week 12 - 19 September. The report showed good interception results, but Broadcast Control missions suffered from faulty radio equipment, lack of briefing, and controllers forcing pilots to break radio silence, thereby invalidating the missions.

One of the major discrepancies reported on interception missions concerned controller directions to take-off during inclement weather. A number of missions have been aborted because the pilots found visibility too poor soon after being airborne.



TIME FOR THE MONTHS JULY, AUGUST, AND SEPTEMBER

Squadron	July	August	September
334th .....	323:15 .....	472:05 .....	545:00
335th .....	225:70 .....	283:40 .....	437:00
336th .....	254:40 .....	362:40 .....	413:05
TOTAL	83:15	111:25	1395:05

Quarterly Total ..... 3346:45



### FACILITIES

After the move from Langley Field, Virginia to inactive fields and bases, the men found living conditions and recreational facilities at a minimum. Soon after arriving at the bases however, improvements began.

Special Services established a service club at New Castle in which the chapel, base movie, library, and post exchange were located. As soon as construction can be completed will be alleviated and the present service club remodeled for a NEO club.

The situation at Dover was very depressing at the first, but is now taking on a brighter look. They are setting up clubs and recreational facilities that will soon be in operation. This will be a great boost to morale for the men who moved into Dover to find living conditions at such an extreme.

This situation improved greatly as individuals became settled in their work and had an opportunity to improve their own living conditions.

Housing off base was at a premium and there is still a shortage of housing, but it is not so critical as the initial weeks.



NARRATIVE



The month of July marked the ending of another half-year of training and experience for the Fourth Fighter-Interceptor Group.

Thus came the beginning of new and different training. On 5 August 1950, the Group was officially informed of its coming move.

With news of the move came many problems that necessitated keen and accurate coordination between sections and squadrons. One of the most hampering problems was that of personnel. Experienced personnel were constantly being transferred, sent to schools, and sent overseas. These men were replaced by inexperienced men who could not be trained in time to devote their entire efficiency toward the move as is always the case with large numbers of new personnel.

On 13 August 1950, the move began. Group Headquarters and the 334th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron moved to New Castle County Airport, Delaware. The 335th Squadron moved to Andrews Air Force Base, Washington 25, D.C. while the 336th Squadron moved into Dover Air Force Base, Dover, Delaware. When an initial survey party of the 336th Squadron arrived at Dover Air Force Base, they learned that National Guard troops would occupy most of the suitable buildings until late in August. Consequently this necessitated setting the Squadron up in tents until all National Guard Units had completed summer encampment. Near the end of August the National Guard Units departed for their home stations and



the 336th Squadron was able to move into the buildings.

After the move was completed there was still a considerable shortage of personnel, both experienced and inexperienced. Office space was insufficient, storage space became a premium, and office equipment was at a minimum.

One of the greatest disturbances created by the move was that of morale. A large percentage of the personnel had their families and homes established on or near Langley Field. The transfer meant that many of them would be separated until housing facilities and accommodations could be sought near the new bases they were soon to occupy.

Housing was one of the major personnel problems the men were forced to come with. Supply seemed above demand and soon rents reached an exorbitant level. Despite this fact a number of families have been moved closer to the designated bases.

It was natural to expect morale to be below normal with all the confusion and turmoil created by such a move. It was moving from a permanent base to inactive bases, leaving friends and relatives, and knowing the possibilities of being shipped overseas. A surprising number of men have surmised that the next step will be overseas, but any move during a time of war would have created the same rumor.

Personnel of 336th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron were perhaps entitled to the greatest slump in morale. When they first arrived at Dover Air Force Base they found the National Guard occupying the buildings for which they were scheduled. Because of this they



were forced to set up squad tents. A field kitchen was set up and then they began to settle under the unexpected conditions. Soon after this the National Guard moved out and the buildings were taken over by the 336th personnel. Despite these difficulties, morale never reached its predicted low level. Everyone took it in his stride and patiently awaited the movement.

At the writing of this History, morale throughout the entire Group is within its normal margin and on the upswing. Clubs, theatres, and future plans are paving the way for a steady increase. The housing situation is slowly being solved through new civilian developments and families are slowly being reunited. All personnel are acquiring associations within the local communities and have adapted themselves to the locales in which situated.

Because of the separation of Headquarters and the Squadrons it became necessary to initiate some system whereby a constant relation could be maintained between sections. A great deal of communication has been through the aid of the telephone and courier transportation between New Castle County Airport and Dover Air Force Base, Dover, Delaware. Although this proved satisfactory, still it was insufficient for direct control. Because of this Group staff visits have become mandatory and frequent. Through this method Group Headquarters has been able to note major discrepancies and recommend action for their elimination.

One of the most difficult problems confronting the Group at New Castle County Airport was base security. Being a civilian airport, it has been impossible to eliminate unauthorized personnel from entering the base. To combat this all Group



aircraft and larger space has been concentrated into one specific area and Air police are on Guard twenty-four hours every day. A password system has been initiated, but at the present time it is insufficient to cope with the situation. More efficient security plans are in the process of draft and should establish a somewhat definite standard within a short period of time.

At this time these problems have only been alleviated instead of eliminated. These problems remain acute and are receiving the utmost attention. It is hoped that within the near future they will become a thing of the past.

On the 10th day of September 1950, 2nd Lieutenant Arthur C. Durston, Jr., AC 120522, was killed at New Castle County Airport while participating in a Ground Control Intercept mission. The Group and Squadron command personnel regret the unfortunate incident and loss of Lt. Durston. Fellow officers attended the memorial services held in the base chapel.

The Fourth Fighter-Interceptor Group is now moving into the final quarter of the year with the predictions of ending with the high degree success and achievement for which they are so well known. As for the future, the majority of things, both administratively and physically are casting a brighter glow. A motivating slogan for the Group to maintain and support is:

"that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth."



SPECIAL SUBJECT SECTION

BIOGRAPHY OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL MEYER



Lieutenant Colonel John C. Meyer, top-scoring American pilot of World War II now living, destroyed 24 1/2 German planes in the air and 13 on the ground during almost two years with the Eighth Air Force in Europe. A Senior Pilot with over 2000 hours flying time, the 31 year old officer flew 200 combat missions, totaling 162 hours, in both Republic P-47 Thunderbolts and North American P-51 Mustangs.

In July 1946, after almost seven years service, he was transferred into the Regular Air Force and prior to his assignment as Commanding Officer of the Fourth Fighter-Interceptor Group, served as Air Force Liaison Officer to the House of Representatives.

Colonel Meyer was born in Brooklyn, New York, April 3, 1915. After graduation from Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, he enlisted as a flying cadet in November 1936.

The following July he was graduated from flying school and appointed a Second Lieutenant in the Air Reserve. After serving a year as an instructor at various fields in the United States, he went to Iceland where he received combat training and flew convoy patrols with the 23rd Pursuit Squadron until September 1942. At this time he returned to the United States for service as an instructor.

In January 1943, he organized and activated the 47th Fighter Squadron at Westover Field, Massachusetts, and the



following July took it to Europe as a part of the 352nd Fighter Group of the Eighth Air Force.

Colonel Meyer, who was unhurt in aerial combat but once injured by ground flak, shot down his first German plane late in October 1943. He and eight other fighters were returning from a bomber escort mission to Germany when they saw six Messerschmitts 109's preparing to attack a lone crippled B-17. During the ensuing fight, the German formation was routed and Colonel Meyer shot down ~~the~~ first enemy plane.

One of the few officers to be awarded two Oak Leaf Clusters to the Distinguished Service Cross, Colonel Meyer received the coveted decoration each time from General Carl Spaatz, retired Chief of Staff of the Air Force, who was then Commanding General of the U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe.

His first Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded for extraordinary heroism in action on May 8, 1944, when he led a flight of eight fighters in an attack against a much larger force trying to intercept an American bomber formation. The enemy flight was dispersed, but during the engagement Colonel Meyer and his wingman became separated from their flight and lost considerable altitude. While regaining it, they saw another flight of 15 or more enemy fighters flying toward the bombers. The two pilots attacked and broke up the formation, with Colonel Meyer shooting down three German fighters.

Six months later he was awarded the first cluster to the cross



for similar action when he was separated from his flight over Kassel, Germany, and single-handedly attacked a flight of 20 to 25 Focke-Wulfs and Messerschmitts destroying four of them.

In November 1944, he became Deputy Commander of the 352nd Fighter Group and during the following two months destroyed 11 aircraft in 19 missions.

The leading pilot became leading European ace on Christmas Day, 1944, when he shot down two more German fighters, bringing his total to 32. A week later, on New Year's Day, he won his second DSC cluster when he led 12 fighters of the 487th Squadron against more than 50 German fighters who were attacking the field from which he and his men were trying to take off. Just as he became airborne, Colonel Meyer engaged the German leader and shot him down. During this fight the squadron shot down 23 of the fighters and broke up the attack without loss to themselves.

Colonel Meyer returned to the United States in February 1945, and has since been Director of the First Fighter Command Gunnery School at Suffolk County Army Air Field at West Hampton Beach, New York; as Senior commander of the Millville (New Jersey) Army Air Field; and at Mitchell Field, New York; Tampa, Florida; and March Field, California.

Other than the decorations mentioned, Colonel Meyer has been awarded the Silver Star with one Oak Leaf cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross and five clusters, Air Medal with 14 clusters, Purple Heart, and the French and Belgian Croix de Guerres with Palms.



He and his wife, the former Miss Mary Moore, of Port Lee,  
New Jersey, who was a WAVE officer when he met her during the  
war, have three children, Peter James, two, Mary Christine, one,  
and John Jr., 5 months.







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